

# City of Wichita Neighborhood Resource Guide



***“Assisting citizens with answers  
to frequently asked questions”***  
(Revised 10-05)



# Neighborhood Resource Guide

The City of Wichita is proud to present to our citizens the **Neighborhood Resource Guide**. Through the format of “Frequently Asked Questions” the intent of this guide is to assist you in meeting your basic neighborhood needs with answers to common inquiries.

Neighborhood growth and development is a prime concern of the City of Wichita, as we face economic challenges on all levels. Our partnerships with neighborhood organizations and grass-root initiatives continue to be a great asset to our on-going effort to provide quality service to the citizens of our community. This guide is another means of effective communication and it is our hopes that it proves to be valuable to you and your organization.

We invite you to actively participate in your neighborhood groups and become visible to the District Advisory Boards where you live. How? By participating and attending the monthly meetings, whenever possible, so that your voice can be heard. All of these meetings are open to the public and all citizens are invited to attend and provide input.

We have made every effort to provide accurate and current information, however, if you find an error; please notify the Neighborhood Services staff at 268-4516 or contact us at the addresses listed below:

Sincerely,

The Neighborhood Services Staff

Dana Brown, Supervisor  
District V  
City Manager’s Office  
455 North Main, 13<sup>th</sup> Floor (02)  
(316) 268-4516

Virgena Gilkey, Neighborhood Assistant  
District I  
Atwater Neighborhood City Hall  
2755 East 19<sup>th</sup> Street (14)  
(316) 303-8017

Kelli Glassman, Neighborhood Assistant  
District II  
City Manager’s Office  
455 North Main, 13<sup>th</sup> Floor (02)  
(316) 268-4516

Vicki Mork, Neighborhood Assistant  
District III  
Colvin Neighborhood City Hall  
2820 South Roosevelt (10)  
(316) 303-8030

Brandon Kauffman, Neighborhood Assistant  
District IV  
Stanley/Aley Neighborhood City Hall  
1749 South Martinson (13)  
(316) 303-8009

Terri Dozal, Neighborhood Assistant  
District VI  
Evergreen Neighborhood Assistant  
2700 North Woodland (04)  
(316) 303-8042

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

Neighborhood Organization.....	4
Neighborhood Streets and Lights .....	6
Neighborhood Environment and Appearance .....	8
Neighborhood Health and Environment .....	11
Neighborhood Planning and Zoning .....	13
Municipal Court Procedures .....	19
Library Services.....	21
Park and Recreation.....	24
Water and Sewer.....	25

# NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION

---

Do you know your neighbors? Is there a “problem” property on your block? Would you like to have a neighborhood cleanup, hold a National Night Out Block party, meet your Community Police Officer or establish a Neighborhood Watch?

A Neighborhood Association can help you accomplish all of the above and build a sense of community while you do it. Organizing your neighborhood is not as difficult as you might think and there help available.

Every neighborhood within the city limits is in one of the six Wichita City Council Districts. Each Council District has a Neighborhood Assistant who is available to help you through the organization process. The NA has information including a guide for Forming A Neighborhood Organization with easy steps to follow and guides for by-laws.

## Why organize Your Neighborhood?

1. A unified neighborhood is a strong force in maintaining healthy communities.
2. Neighborhood organizations bring together people of diverse backgrounds, with common concerns for safety, properties, homes and community interests.
3. Neighborhood organizations help City staff and elected officials identify and resolve issues and concerns.
4. There is strength in numbers – having a unified voice can make a difference.

## How do I organize a neighborhood association?

Before organizing a new neighborhood association, check for existing associations in and around your neighborhood. Contact your neighborhood assistant to determine the boundaries of existing associations. Each neighborhood assistant has a list of the neighborhood and homeowner associations for the entire city.

If you and your neighbors decide to organize your own neighborhood association, consider the following:

- Avoid overlapping boundaries with another neighborhood association.
- Widely distribute information throughout the neighborhood about the new association’s first meeting.
- Include everyone that lives or owns property within the association’s boundaries as a potential member.
- Identify regular meeting time and place.
- Elect officers and adopt by-laws. The NAs can assist you with this effort.
- Keep everyone informed about association activities. A newsletter or a Web site is two ways to inform your neighborhood about the association’s activities.

Another resource is the Wichita Independent Neighborhoods. This organization is dedicated to the growth and development of Neighborhood Associations in Wichita. Contact information:

### **Wichita Independent Neighborhoods (WIN)**

**1150 N Broadway, Suite 101**

**Wichita, Kansas 67204**

**Phone: (316) 260-8000**

**Email: [WIN@midtowncnc.org](mailto:WIN@midtowncnc.org)**

# NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION

---

## How do I organize a block party in my neighborhood?

Block parties are used primarily for social activities in order to bring a “block of residents” together for a neighborhood event. While this is a positive form of social gathering, there are fundamental steps that must be followed by each organizer.

The following information is necessary to adhere to for anyone interested in closing a portion of a public street for a block party:

1. **Residential streets** may be closed to hold a neighborhood party involving residents in a block or specific area. Residents are encouraged to contact the Police Station in their area for advice and support on organizing a safe event.

Patrol North – 688-9500  
Patrol East – 688-9331

Patrol South – 337-9200  
Patrol West – 941-0673

2. **Signatures** should be obtained from all residents on the street to whose driveway access will be closed. No special form is needed. The purpose is to notify and obtain permission from the residents for the street closure.
3. The paper should also list the **name of a contact person, date, time and location** of the block party. The party requesting the street closure is responsible for any damages to people or property.
4. The paper including the signatures and block party information may be delivered in person, sent by mail, or faxed (268-4519) to the **City Manager's Office** at least seven (7) days prior to the event.

City Manager's Office  
City of Wichita  
City Hall – 13<sup>th</sup> Floor  
455 N. Main  
Wichita, KS 67202

A letter of confirmation will be returned to the sender. Police, Fire, and Transit Departments will be copied on the confirmation letter for their information.

5. Residents are responsible for obtaining the necessary **barricades and flashers** to close the street. Places to rent barricades are listed in the yellow pages (or you may borrow from a contractor, if feasible). The City does NOT provide barricades. In addition, the City authorizes **only the use of regulation barricades**. (No vehicles, bales of hay, rope, etc.)

**Additional Questions? Call 268-4351**

# NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS AND LIGHTING

---

## **How can I get a streetlight installed to improve security?**

The City provides residential streetlights at intersections, and mid-block lights when intersections are more than 1,000 feet apart. There is a small budget to install mid-block streetlights in certain inner-city areas. To request a streetlight, call **Public Works Traffic Engineering at 268-4448**, with a specific address or location. The request will be evaluated based on existing streetlights and block length. However, streetlights are designed to provide general lighting for vehicular and pedestrian traffic, not security lighting. Porch lights, yard lights, motion detectors, and security lights available through Westar, are better choices for security purposes.

## **The streetlight on my corner is burned out. Who do I call to get it fixed?**

The streetlights are actually owned and maintained by Westar Energy, and 'leased' to the City. Call Westar's 24-hour number at 383-8600. Please be prepared to provide a specific location. If the light has not been repaired in ten days, call PW Traffic Engineering at 268-4446.

## **Why doesn't the City just do one project at a time, instead of tearing up streets all over town?**

If we built only one project at a time, there would soon be a backlog of so many projects; we would never get caught up with the need. Street construction projects improve traffic flow by providing additional lanes; turn bays, etc., making travel safer and more efficient. Those orange barrels are a sign of economic vitality, advance planning, traffic safety, and progress!

## **My neighbor raked her leaves into the gutter. How can I get the street swept?**

The City has five street sweepers to sweep more than 1,500 miles of paved streets. Allowing for snow and ice storms, windstorm cleanup, and other interruptions, street cleaning crews are able to sweep residential streets 2 to 3 times a year, with less-heavily 'forested' streets swept less often. We are not able to clean streets by request, unless there is a traffic hazard or other public safety concern. Driving from one request location to another would be too inefficient.

Raking leaves or grass into the gutter can lead to clogged storm sewers and drainage problems. It is also a violation of City code. The Natural Resources section of Public Works recommends that leaves be used as mulch, to conserve water as well as landfill space.

## **My dirt street is very rough. How can I get it graded?**

Like street sweeping, street grading is done on a rotating basis. We are able to grade dirt streets about 10-12 times each year (weather permitting). For information about the grading schedule, call 268-4060.

## **How can I get my street paved, or water and sewer lines extended to my property?**

Call **Public Works Engineering, at 268-4501**, to requests improvements such as paving, water or sanitary sewer lines. A petition signed by 50 percent or more of the affected property owners is required. Engineering staff will prepare the petition, including cost information, for you to circulate.

# NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS AND LIGHTING

---

**I get stopped by red lights when I drive across town. I thought the traffic lights were supposed to be coordinated so people could keep going.**

Traffic lights on most major streets are synchronized to keep traffic flowing in the predominant direction. If you are driving against the predominant direction (driving east when rush-hour traffic is headed west), or if you change directions (south on one street and turn west on another) you may be out of synch with the lights. Also, a street that carries more traffic than the one you are on (Rock Road versus Lincoln, for example) will get 'preference' in the signal timing, to keep traffic from backing up on the predominant street. And lastly, if you are traveling significantly faster or slower than the speed limit, you will not be in synch with the lights.

**There are a lot of kids in my neighborhood who play in the street. How can we get stop signs installed so they will be safe?**

The purpose of stop signs is to minimize conflicts (accidents) between traffic traveling in different directions. They are not a speed control device, nor do they turn the street into a play area. Stop signs are effective when there is more traffic in one direction than the other; the less-traveled street will be required to stop. At intersections where there are no stop signs, the car on the right has the right-of-way and the other car must yield. In effect, all traffic must be prepared to stop at an unsigned or "open" intersection.

**I hit a pothole and ruined a tire. Will the City pay for a new tire?**

You may file a claim for damages (reimbursement) by calling the **Law Department 268-4681**. However, the City is not legally liable for damages if it was not aware of the defect, or did not have reasonable time to repair the defect. Filing a claim does not guarantee reimbursement. It is suggested that you call Traffic Engineering to report the pothole problem.

**My street doesn't have a storm sewer, so what is the 'storm water fee' for, on my water bill?**

The storm water fee finances a variety of drainage activities, including storm sewer maintenance (line cleaning, inlet repairs), construction of new storm sewers, and correction of drainage problems where storm sewers do not exist. Even though not everyone has a storm sewer on their street, we all depend on the citywide storm sewer system to keep streets passable as we drive to work, school or personal business.

**Someone spray painted obscenities on a bridge support in my neighborhood. Who do I call to have it removed?**

Call the **Neighborhood Action Line at 529-9999** to report graffiti on public property. Public Works Maintenance crews will remove it using a high-pressure sprayer or paint over it as appropriate. Defaced stop signs will be cleaned or replaced. Call Central Inspection at 468-4481 to report graffiti on private property. Graffiti on private property will be painted over or removed by City crews, with the permission of the property owner. (If you are unsure, call either number and we will get it to the appropriate office.)

**What does the City do with its used vehicles?**

Fleet Maintenance holds a public auction of vehicles/equipment in the fall. Call 268-4636 in August for dates and details.

# NEIGHBORHOOD ENVIRONMENT AND APPEARANCE

---

## **What does Forestry do?**

This section of the department is responsible for the pruning, removal, emergency tree work, planting, and establishment care for all trees in the right-of-way, parks, and public open space.

## **My tree needs pruning, what is the procedure?**

Call the Forestry Office at or e-mail the request from the City's web page. A work request is prepared for each request with a name, telephone number and a description of the service requested. An inspection of the requested work is performed generally within 10 days. Work may then be scheduled based on the site inspection. Options may include: a) schedule removal if tree is in very poor condition or dead b) priority pruning and scheduled within the next 6 months c) no work at this time and tree will be pruned when the entire area is pruned with the systematic or block pruning rotation d) no work as it is determined that the tree is on private property.

## **How does the systematic prunings plan work?**

A selection of 10 to 20 square block areas for pruning are identified based on need, citizen request, or management directives. Forestry crews prune every street tree within the selected boundaries. In addition declining trees or dead trees will be marked for removal and new tree planting will generally follow this pruning/removal process within the next 1 to 2 seasons. This system of management and care of public trees is much more efficient than responding to each individual request and "hop-scotching" around the city.

## **A storm has brought down many limbs all over town. If they are put out on the curb, will you pick them up?**

The City Council may declare an emergency and will direct staff to respond. Each event is different and will call for a different response. The media will be informed of action to be taken and citizens will be informed through the media.

## **I have a broken and hanging limb in my tree, will you take care of this?**

If the tree is in the right-of-way this will generally be handled within one or two days. If it is on your personal property, the tree is your responsibility. But with a major storm event it may take months to respond.

## **I have limbs piled out near the curb. Will you pick them up?**

If the limbs have fallen from a city tree, or have come down as a result of a storm event, then forestry staff will pick them up. If the citizen prunes public trees, then they are responsible for the disposal of the limbs. If the limbs have fallen from a tree on private property then the owner or resident will be responsible for disposal of the limbs. The City does not have a brush pick-up service.

## **I have tree limbs growing up into my electrical wires in the back yard. Will you prune those?**

No, you need to contact Westar at 383-8600 or 261-6581



# NEIGHBORHOOD ENVIRONMENT AND APPEARANCE

---

## **I have a tree in the alley that needs attention.**

If the alley is a “through” alley and dedicated street right-of-way, then the city will respond to tree service calls. But, we do not respond to tree care within easements as this is private property and the owner is responsible for tree care. Volunteer trees growing along property lines and in fences are the responsibility of the adjoining property owner.

## **I see new trees all over town, how do I get one in front of my house?**

If you live within one of areas that was recently “block pruned” then planting will follow by city staff and the resident will be notified. If you are outside one of these areas then you may plant on your own. Call or e-mail the office for a copy of the recommended tree list.

## **Where do I get chips for landscaping, does the city have this free mulch available for the public?**

No, but mulch is available in bag or bulk from local garden centers and in bulk from the Wood Compost and Recycle Center @ 832-0400. During the holiday season free mulch is provided at numerous park sites as part of the City’s Treecycle program. The City and Westar also partner with the Sedgwick County Zoo and will sometimes make mulch and firewood available free to the public.

## **My neighbor has a tree that is creating a problem or appears unsafe, can the City help?**

If the tree appears dangerous then you may contact Health Department @ 268-8351 and the tree will be inspected. City staff will determine if a hazard exists and then may proceed with nuisance abatement procedures to eliminate the hazardous condition. Limbs or roots of a neighbor’s tree that create a conflict or problem for you should be handled between property owners.

## **Does the city have a spray program for insect pests?**

Spraying for pest and disease on public trees in the right-of-way is the responsibility of the owner. The city does not normally apply insecticides or fungicides to street trees.

## **The roots of the “city tree” appear to be lifting my sidewalk or drive approach, how will the City respond?**

Forestry staff will inspect the tree and site and determine if there is a root that may be responsible for lifting the walk. If a root is discovered then the root will be cut to prevent further lifting of the pavement. This action will not bring the pavement back to a level condition, but will prevent further lifting. Sidewalk repair and replacement is the responsibility of the adjacent property owner.

# NEIGHBORHOOD ENVIRONMENT AND APPEARANCE

---

**I have noticed a dead tree in the right-of-way or through alley, what is the procedure for removal?**

Contact the forestry office and the tree will be inspected. If the tree is dead or in a condition of irreversible decline, then it will be marked with an orange dot at the base of the trunk and scheduled for removal. Generally the trees marked for removal are "topped for removal" during October through December. The tree is cut back to a large stump at this time. Then during January through March the remaining stump is cut and removed and a stump grinder removes the stump and roots below ground level so new turf or landscaping can be installed.

**I want the firewood from my tree that is scheduled for removal. Will the city cut and leave the firewood for me?**

Yes, wood will be cut into small lengths for the homeowner and left at the base of the stump for the owner or resident. But if the removal is an elm tree then all wood debris will be disposed of by forestry staff to help prevent the spread of Dutch Elm Disease. The city does not have free firewood to provide to the public, but as stated above the City and Westar may make this available free to the public in cooperation with the Sedgwick County Zoo.

**I have a live and healthy city tree that I would like removed in front of my home. How do I go about getting this removed.**

Contact the forestry office and make the request for removal. The tree will be inspected and if the inspector approves the removal then a letter will be sent to the adjoining property owner granting permission for removal at the owner's expense. The stump must also be removed to eliminate trip hazards.

# NEIGHBORHOOD HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

---

## **Can I store my vehicle outside on my property?**

Yes, you can “store” vehicles on your property in side yards and the back yard, but **not** in the front yard.

## **How many cars can I store on my property?**

There is no limit on the number of vehicles you may store as long as they are not in the front yard and they are fully operable and street legal.

## **Is there a difference between “storing” a car and “parking” a car on my property?**

Yes. “Storing” implies long-term (more than 3 days at a time without moving it). “Parking,” means driving the car on and off the property more or less daily.

## **Where can I park a car on my property?**

Cars can be parked anywhere on your property as long as it’s on a surfaced area – such as, concrete, asphalt, or rocked surface.

## **What do you mean when you say that a car must be “street legal”?**

“Street legal” means that your car could be driven on a public street in front of a police officer and there would be no reason why he would give you a ticket because of the condition of your car. This includes having a current license on the car.

## **What can happen if I leave an inoperable or non-street legal car outside on my property?**

You could be given a citation and have a mandatory court appearance with a possible fine of up to \$500 and/or after legal notification, your vehicle could be towed away. The cost of the tow will be charged to the owner of the property.

## **How many dogs and/or cats can I legally have on my property?**

Without an Animal Maintenance Permit (AMP), you can have only 2 of each. With an AMP, you may have up to 4 of each.

## **Is there a way to have more than 4 dogs?**

Not if your property is zoned residential.

## **Is there a way to have more than 4 cats?**

Yes, you can acquire a cattery license. This requires permission from the majority of the adjacent householders and **all** the cats must be kept inside at all times.

## **How often do I have to pick up after my dogs?**

If you have only one dog, you must clean the yard at least once a week or more often, as needed, to prevent odors and flies. If you have more than one dog, you must clean the yards as many times a week as the number of dogs you have.

# NEIGHBORHOOD HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

---

## **Do puppies and kittens count in the total number of animals allowed?**

Not until they reach 5 months of age. After they have reached that age, they are considered “adult” for purposes of this code.

## **How do I get an Animal Maintenance Permit (AMP)?**

Call the Environmental Health Department at 268-8351 and request the permit.

## **Are there other kinds of animals that require my having an Animal Maintenance Permit?**

Yes. Depending on the number and kind of animal, you would need an AMP for rabbits, chickens, pigeons, horses, sheep, goats, etc.

## **Are there limits on how many animals of other kinds I can have on my property?**

Yes. For each kind of permissible animal there is an upper limit. For information about that, call 268-8351.

# NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING AND ZONING

---

## **What is the mission of the Planning Department?**

The mission of the Planning Department is to provide timely, accurate, and complete information, along with professional advice, on the orderly, efficient, and attractive development and redevelopment of land in Wichita and Sedgwick County.

## **What is zoning?**

Zoning is the classification of land into districts for the purpose of regulating the use of land, including the use, placement, and size of buildings. A zoning law consists of a zoning map that shows the boundaries of the various districts and a written text setting for the regulations applicable to each district. Zoning regulations must be reasonable and can be implemented only to protect and promote the health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the public.

## **What happens in the rezoning process?**

A public hearing before the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission (MAPC) is scheduled and a notice of this meeting is published in the official newspaper. Notice of the hearing is also sent by first class mail to the property owners on the certified ownership list filed with the application. The neighborhood District Advisory Board (DAB) will consider some zoning requests at their regular meeting prior to the MAPC public hearing. After the public hearing and recommendations from the DAB and the MAPC, the rezoning request is sent to the appropriate governing body (Wichita City Council or Sedgwick County Commission) for final approval or disapproval.

## **How can a zone change request be protested?**

Anyone who owns property within 200 feet of a zone change request site inside Wichita or within 1,000 feet of a zone change request in the unincorporated area of Sedgwick County may protest the zone change request by filing a Protest Petition with the appropriate clerk (City Clerk or County Clerk) within 14 days following the public hearing by the MAPC. To be valid, a petition must be signed by all owners of a protesting property. If owners of 20% of the land within the protest area (200 foot or 1,000 foot radius) file valid petitions within the 14-day protest period, more than a simple majority of the governing body is required for the zone change to be approved.

## **Why is historic preservation important?**

Preservation of the built environment provides a community the opportunity to celebrate its diverse cultural heritage by focusing on its historic resources that include its buildings, parks, bridges, monuments, and archaeological sites. Preservation is also a commitment to fiscal responsibility as the built environment represents taxpayer investment in infrastructure and building stock. Communities subscribing to sustainable development practices successfully integrate the old and new by combining preservation, adaptive reuse, and new construction. Communities can reap economic, environmental, social, and cultural benefits through preservation efforts.

# NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING AND ZONING

---

## **What does it mean to “subdivide” for platting purposes?**

Subdividing is the process of preparing raw land for future development or resubdividing existing development. It involves the division of property within Wichita and most of the unincorporated area of Sedgwick County according to regulations approved by the two governing bodies. Platting of property was being done by the City of Wichita as early as 1870. Subdivision regulations ensure the orderly development of land and the construction of physical improvements such as, streets, water, and sewer lines.

## **What is the process for subdividing land?**

Most owners of land contract with a licensed engineer or surveyor in order to plat property. A legal description of the property is submitted to the Planning Department, along with a scaled drawing by a registered engineer or surveyor. Planning staff coordinates with other City and County departments and makes a recommendation for required improvements and conditions for platting to the Subdivision Committee. Final approval of plats is authorized by state statute to the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission, while the governing body makes acceptance of dedications and guarantees for improvements.

## **What is annexation?**

Annexation sounds like a complicated, technical term, but it’s meaning is really quite simple. Annexation is the process by which a city adds land to its jurisdiction, in order to extend its services, laws, voting privileges, and better meet the needs of those residents living in the annexed area. In many cases, the landowner, the developer who built your neighborhood, or perhaps your neighbors, asked to be annexed into the City of Wichita to receive city water and sewer service.

## **What is the Board of Zoning Appeals?**

The Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) is a group of citizens appointed by the governing body to review requests for variances of the specific requirements of the zoning code and appeals from the zoning administrator’s interpretation of the zoning code. A variance is a deviation from a specific requirement of the zoning code, such as side yard setback, building height, number of parking spaces, etc. The uses permitted in a specific zoning district cannot be varied, however.

## **When is landscaping required?**

Landscaping is required for all non-residential, multi-family, and manufactured home park developments in the City of Wichita that occur along major streets. It is also required along other streets when the development is across the street from residentially zoned property. Landscaping is required as a buffer between non-residential development and residential zoning, and between multi-family or manufactured-home park development and one-family or two-family zoning. One-family and two-family development is exempt from all landscaping requirements.

# NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING AND ZONING

---

## **Zoning Regulation - What Is It?**

Zoning regulation is the method by which land is classified into different districts for the purpose of regulating uses within each district (examples: residential uses, multifamily residential uses, commercial uses, industrial uses, etc.) Zoning Regulations also govern the size of buildings and placement on lots, parking regulations associated with various uses, fencing and screening requirements, community unit plans and other similar regulations. Zoning regulations are based on general requirements for reasonableness, must promote health, safety, morals and the general welfare of the public as a whole. The City of Wichita Zoning Regulations is incorporated in the Unified Zoning Code.

Zoning regulation has been enforced as law in Wichita since 1926.

## **How do I find out the Zoning Classification and allowed use of my property or other properties in Wichita?**

The City of Wichita Zoning Section has official zoning maps on file at The Office of Central Inspection that reflects current designations for zoning classifications and districts. Citizens may view the maps or call the Zoning Section, Office of Central Inspection, Monday through Friday from 8:00 -5:00. It is helpful to have legal descriptions available for a more precise determination of which zoning classification a particular lot or parcel is in. Legal descriptions are provided either by the County Real Estate department at 383-7691, or are more commonly found on your tax assessment records. It will usually be a Lot#, Block (A, B, C, D) and the name of the Addition.

## **How can I determine what is allowed in my Zoning Classification District?**

Zoning uses are publicized in an official Unified Zoning Code. A copy of the ordinance is available for purchase in the Metropolitan Planning Department. The Code lists the permitted or prohibited uses, Code text and building locations, maximum heights, minimum lot sizes, and densities of development permitted. Interpretations and explanations of Zoning codes and allowed uses are available by calling Zoning personnel at 268-4470 or 268-4479 between 8:00-5:00 P.M. Monday through Friday. Zoning Codes also address issues on parking requirements, parking surfacing requirements for residential and commercial locations, fencing and screening requirements, and any allowed exceptions to uses or variances from zoning codes.

## **Does Wichita have a code that requires buildings and residences to be maintained to some minimum standard?**

Yes, Wichita has had a "Minimum Housing Code" since 1960. This code requires that all residential housing units be maintained to certain minimum standards. Wichita also has a "Minimum Premise Standards Code" for non-residential buildings. OCI Neighborhood Inspection staff enforces these existing building codes through initial inspection; issuance of detailed violation notices to owners and interested parties; performance of follow-up inspections; and, if necessary, issuance of criminal complaints to owners of non-compliant properties who must appear in the City's "Neighborhood Court" to answer the charges and/or to bring the property into compliance under a court order.

# NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING AND ZONING

---

A pamphlet titled “Neighborhood Inspection” outlines the enforcement process and typical compliance time frames in greater detail.

Complaints about the condition of existing housing or other buildings can be made to OCI by calling the Neighborhood Action Line at 529-9999.

## **Is there a City law that limits the amount of time that a house or other building can be vacant?**

No, there is no law that limits the time that a house or other building can be vacant. However, in the early 1990's, the Minimum Housing Code was amended to require that vacant residential structures be maintained on the exterior to meet certain minimum standards. Also, if boarded up, owners or interested parties are required to board the structure in a prescribed manner, and to paint the boards that are attached to windows and/or doors. These same rules apply to non-residential buildings.

If a property owner does not maintain the exterior of the building as required by code, the owner can be issued compliance notices and eventually taken to “Neighborhood Court” as outlined for any occupied structure.

## **Can the City “condemn” and demolish buildings that have been damaged by fire, are abandoned, are in severe disrepair, or are in very unsafe condition?**

Yes, the City of Wichita may “condemn” any building that is deemed to be dangerous and/or unsafe under guidelines set forth in Kansas State Law.

Again, OCI enforces these dangerous building condemnation actions through initial inspection, issuance of prescribed notices, follow-up inspection activities, scheduling of required public hearings before the City’s Board of Code Standards and Appeals and City Council, and administration of demolition/removal contracts for those properties, which the City Council ultimately “condemns”.

The condemnation process typically takes a minimum of 5-9 months from initiation to demolition. However, there are some cases that can be declared as “emergencies” (such as badly fire-damaged structures which are in imminent danger of collapse) that can be removed within 30-60 days from the time of case initiation.

After a dangerous building is removed, the City files a property tax lien against the property for the cost of demolition and removal plus an administrative fee. Ownership of the land from which the dangerous building was removed stays with the original owner, and does not revert to the City.

## **Does the City of Wichita have laws that govern where I can park or store my vehicles, boats, trailers or similar items?**

Yes, the City of Wichita has adopted the Wichita/Sedgwick County Unified Zoning Code, which classifies land into various districts (e.g., single-family residential, multi-family, commercial, industrial), and regulates the types of land uses within each zoning district.



# NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING AND ZONING

---

In most residential zoning districts, vehicles must be parked on a surfaced driveway area if parked in the front yard area. The Zoning Code limits this driveway area size and location within the front yard. Stored vehicles, boats, campers, trailers and similar items can only be stored in the rear yard or side yard of the property. If the side yard is along a street, such items can generally not be stored in such a side yard.

Initial inspection, issuance of notices, follow-inspection activity, and issuance of windshield tickets or criminal complaints against the vehicle and/or property owner/s is generally performed by OCI Neighborhood Inspection Staff, but may also be initiated by Community Police and Environmental Health Department officers.

A pamphlet called “Zoning Enforcement in Your Neighborhood” outlines the complaint process and typical enforcement time frames in greater detail.

## **Are certain businesses allowed in residential zoning districts?**

Only those businesses that classify as legal “Home Occupations” under the Unified Zoning Code, and have been licensed by the City as Home Occupations, can be operated in residential zoning districts. Such businesses must be conducted out of the business owner’s residence. Employees other than occupants of the residents and business identification signs are not allowed in most home occupations. Businesses, which create additional vehicular or pedestrian traffic in a neighborhood, are generally not allowed.

Home Occupation license applications may be obtained from OCI, which approves and enforces Home Occupation regulations under the Unified Zoning Code. Licenses must be issued by the City for every home occupation, and must be renewed annually.

## **What is “grandfathering” or the “grandfather clause”?**

“Grandfathering” or the “grandfather clause” is a common term for a legal, “nonconforming” zoning land use that was established prior to current zoning code regulation. A nonconforming use is one that does not comply with present City zoning land use regulations, but was legal in the county before being annexed into the City, or was legal under City Zoning Regulations when the use was first established.

Nonconforming uses are allowed to remain in existence provided the type of use is not changed to a more intensive zoning use, or the use is abandoned or vacated for a period of one to two years, depending on the use type.

## **Can I work on cars or other vehicles at my residence?**

In residential zoning districts, only “minor” maintenance can be performed to vehicles that are owned by residents of the property. “Minor” maintenance includes such things as oil changes and tire changes. Major work to vehicles owned by the property residents cannot be performed, unless done within an enclosed garage or building. Major work would include items such as transmission work, engine overhauls, etc.

In residential zoning districts, property occupants are not allowed to work on any vehicles owned by persons not residing on the property.

# NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING AND ZONING

---

## **Are building permits required for all remodeling work, additions and new construction?**

Generally speaking, a building permit is required for all remodeling work, additions and new construction. Exceptions include: painting; wall papering, wood/metal/chain link fences under 8' high; concrete or masonry fences not more than 4' high measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall; roofing repairs that involve less than 400 square feet; siding repairs less than 400 square feet; window awnings; exterior decks, stoops or porches not more than 30 inches above grade without overhead structures and not over any basement or story below; repair to sheetrock or plaster on non-fire rated walls when the total area does not exceed 100 square feet.

## **Who may obtain building permits?**

An owner-occupant of the single-family residence on which building remodeling or construction work is to be performed, or any contractor holding a valid City of Wichita building contractor's license may apply for and obtain a building permit from OCI. An owner-occupant may also obtain permits to do electrical, plumbing and/or mechanical work on a single-family residence if they can pass a "homeowner's" test administered by OCI.

## **Do I need a permit to place a small, prefabricated shed or storage building?**

Yes, if the building is over 150 square feet in size, a building permit must be obtained from OCI. If 150 square feet or less in size, something called a "Location Permit" must be obtained from OCI to assure that the building will not be placed in any public easements, over public utility lines, or in any required zoning building setbacks.

## **Home Occupation - What Is This?**

Home occupations are legally licensed and operated personal service businesses, which are conducted out of the business owner's residence. Employees other than occupants of the residence and business identification signs are not allowed in most home occupations. Home occupations licenses allow small businesses (which do not create additional vehicular or pedestrian traffic in residential areas, and do not effect general quality of life in residential areas) to operate, providing an environment, which allows very small entrepreneurs to continue to operate.

Registered and licensed Day Care operations are one of the city's most prevalent home occupations. Some businesses such as doctors, barbers, beauticians and notaries are somewhat of an exception and are regulated by the State. Please contact the Zoning Office to ask about your potential home occupation to obtain license application materials.

## **Where is the Zoning Enforcement Office located and how can I contact them?**

The Zoning section is in the Office of Central Inspection is located in City Hall, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor at 455 N. Main, 67202. Telephone- 268-4479. Zoning Inspection personnel are available Monday through Friday from 7:30 A.M. -5:00 P.M.

# MUNICIPAL COURT PROCEDURES

---

## **What are court costs and why do I have to pay them? I didn't go to court.**

While they are known as "court costs", they are more accurately described as processing fees. State and local governments have assessed different amounts to be paid with each citation issued in addition to the fine. The fee breakdown is listed below:

- Processing costs assessed by the City of Wichita ..... \$23.50
- Domestic Violence Programs fund assessed by the City of Wichita ..... \$3.00
- State Clerk's fee assessed by the State of Kansas..... \$1.00
- Municipal Judges Training fund assessed by the State of Kansas ..... \$.50
- Law Enforcement Training fund assessed by the State of Kansas ..... \$6.00
- City Public Defender fund assessed by the City of Wichita..... \$4.00

## **I am a victim of Domestic Violence and the Police Officer told me to come here. What happens now?**

You need to go to the Domestic Violence Advocate's Office that is part of the Prosecutor's office. Staff is on hand to answer all your questions and help you through this process.

## **Would you check my Driver's License and tell me if it's still suspended?**

By state law, we are not allowed to release that information except to law enforcement officers and officers of the court. You can obtain the information you want by calling the Driver Control Bureau in Topeka at – 1 (785) 296-3671. Please have your Driver's License number handy when you call.

## **I need to find out about /pay my child support. Is this where I do that?**

No. This court only handles misdemeanor criminal and traffic charges. Child Support is supervised by the District Court across the street, in the County Courthouse building. Go to the Domestic department on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor, 525 N. Main.

## **I was appointed a Public Defender and now I'm being charged for it. I thought they were free?**

Public Defenders are not free. They are court appointed attorneys that are provided to the defendant at a substantially reduced rate. The rates are applied at the Judge's discretion.

## **Why do I have to pay a Bench Warrant Fee? I came to court before my warrant was actually issued?**

When the Judge orders a bench warrant, there is additional court activity and paperwork to prepare it for issue. This fee covers those additional costs. Even if your warrant was not issued, the preparations for issuing it have already taken place.

# MUNICIPAL COURT PROCEDURES

---

## **The Prosecutor dismissed my charges. Why do I still have to pay a reinstatement fee?**

When you are issued a ticket, you have ten days to take care of that ticket either by paying it or setting it for court. If you fail to comply, the Municipal Court sends Suspension Orders to the Driver Control Bureau in Topeka to suspend your driver's license. Even if the prosecutor later dismisses those charges, you have still failed to comply within the original ten days. The Driver Control Bureau will not reinstate your driver's license until the Municipal Court sends them the required fee.

## **I received a defective equipment ticket on my car, but I no longer own it. How do I take care of this ticket?**

Take your copy of the ticket and a copy of the Bill of Sale for the car listed on the ticket to the Prosecutor's Office between the hours of 3:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. The prosecutor may dismiss your ticket. However, if a long period of time has passed, you will still owe any reinstatement and warrant fees.

## **Why can't I pick any day I want for my court date? I have a very busy schedule.**

On any given day, this court hears more than a thousand cases. Certain charges are scheduled for specific times. Since space and time in the courtrooms are limited, cases must be scheduled following strict guidelines. The dates offered by the tellers are the only ones still open for those charges.

## **Why can't I talk to a Judge? They can't all be busy?**

As was stated in the previous answer, this court hears more than a thousand cases every day. The Municipal Court has five judges who are on the bench most of each day. A special court session was set aside specifically to allow you access to a judge. Ask for more information on the Walk-in Docket.

## **I was arrested and given a ticket. The ticket says I have ten days to take care of it, but my court date is not until next month. What do I do?**

There are two ways to take care of a ticket. One is to pay it and the other is to set it for court. By giving you a date to appear in court, the Jail "took care of" the ticket for you. Just make sure you show up for court on the date you were given.

# LIBRARY SERVICES

---

## What are your locations, hours, and telephone numbers?

The Central Library is located at 223 S. Main and can be reached at 261-8500. It is open Monday through Thursday, 10:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.; Friday through Saturday, 10:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m., and Sunday 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.

**Lionel Alford Regional Branch Library**  
3447 South Meridian  
(316) 337-9119

Hours of Operation:  
Monday through Thursday  
10:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.; Friday  
through Saturday, 10:00 a.m.  
– 5:00 p.m.; and Sunday 1:00  
– 5:00 p.m.

**Evergreen Branch Library**  
2601 South Arkansas  
(316) 303-8181

Hours of Operation:  
Monday through Thursday  
10:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.; Friday  
through Saturday, 10:00 a.m.  
– 5:00 p.m.; and Sunday 1:00  
– 5:00 p.m.

**Ford Rockwell Branch Library**  
5939 East 9<sup>th</sup> Street  
(316) 688-9361

Hours of Operation:  
Monday through Thursday  
10:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.; Friday  
through Saturday, 10:00 a.m.  
– 5:00 p.m.; and Sunday 1:00  
– 5:00 p.m.

**Westlark Branch Library**  
8515 Bekemeyer  
(316) 337-9456

Hours of Operation:  
Monday through Thursday  
10:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.; Friday  
through Saturday, 10:00 a.m.  
– 5:00 p.m.; and Sunday 1:00  
– 5:00 p.m.

**Maya Angelou Northeast Branch Library**  
3051 E. 21<sup>st</sup> Street  
(316) 688-9580

Hours of Operation:  
Tuesday; 1:00 – 8:00 p.m.  
Wednesday – Saturday; 11:00  
a.m. – 5:30 p.m., Sunday 1:00  
– 5:00 p.m.

**Comotara Branch Library**  
2244 N. Rock Rd.  
(located inside the Dillon's  
grocery store)  
(316) 688-9350

Hours of Operation:  
Monday, Wednesday, and  
Thursday, 10:00 a.m. – 8:00  
p.m.; Tuesday, Friday, and  
Saturday, 10:00 a.m. – 5:30  
p.m.; Sunday, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.

**Linwood Branch Library**  
1901 S. Kansas,  
(316) 337-9125

Hours of Operation:  
Monday, 12:00 – 8:00 p.m.,  
Tuesday - Friday, 10:00 a.m. –  
5:30 p.m.

**Orchard Park Branch Library**  
4808 W. 9<sup>th</sup> Street  
(316) 941-0634

Hours of Operation:  
Monday, 1:00 – 8:00 p.m.,  
Tuesdays - Friday 11:00 a.m.  
– 5:30 p.m.

**Planeview Community Library**  
2820 S. Roosevelt  
(located inside Colvin  
Elementary School)  
(316) 973-7609

Hours of Operation:  
Monday – Friday; 10:00 a.m. –  
5:30 p.m. (except school  
holidays).

## Who can get a library card?

Anyone living in the state of Kansas can get a library card. Cards are issued at every Wichita Public Library location and are valid at all branches. (A separate borrower's card is required for the Planeview Community Library.)

# LIBRARY SERVICES

---

## **What is required to get a library card?**

If you are over eighteen, you will need a printed form of identification with your name and current address. A few examples of valid identification are driver's license, Kansas ID card, voter registration card, printed check, utility bill, or auto registration. If you are under eighteen, your parent or legal guardian must sign your registration card. The minor may use the identification of the signing parent or legal guardian. The adult is ultimately responsible for all items checked out or accessed on the Internet by the minor.

## **How many items can I check out?**

The first time you use your new library card, you may only check out two items. After those two items are returned, you may check out as many items as you like, although there are limits for some special materials such as videos, DVDs, CDs, CD-ROMs, art prints, etc.

## **How long can I keep the items I check out?**

Books are loaned for two to four weeks. Magazines and pamphlets are loaned for two weeks. Cassettes and CDs are loaned for four weeks. Videos and DVDs are loaned for one week. CD-ROMs are loaned for four weeks. Art prints are loaned for six weeks.

## **What if I need items longer?**

Most items can be renewed once for an additional week or two. Since the new due date extends from the date of the renewal, items should be renewed on the due date to get the maximum renewal period and avoid overdue fees. You may renew at the circulation desk, use the Library computer catalog, use the Library's catalog (iPac) online at <http://www.wichita.lib.ks.us>, or use a touchtone phone to call TeleCirc at 262-6991. Non-renewable items include art prints, holiday books, and items with a waiting list.

## **What if I keep an item longer than the loan period?**

You will be assessed an overdue fee. Fees vary depending on the item. Most items are \$0.25 per day, although videos and DVDs are \$1.00 per day. Unpaid fees of \$1.00 or more or any item over fifteen days overdue will suspend your borrowing privileges.

## **Can I return items checked out at one Wichita Public Library location at a different branch?**

Any Wichita Public Library item may be returned to any other Wichita Public Library location. Materials from other libraries, i.e., the Derby Public Library, the Wichita State University Libraries, etc. should not be returned to the Wichita Public Library unless those items were borrowed for you by the WPL Interlibrary loan service.

## **Can I get an item from a different branch delivered to a location closer to me?**

By placing a transfer request, you can select your most convenient pick-up location. Transfers cost \$0.25 but the fee covers all the expenses of delivering books among branches.

# LIBRARY SERVICES

---

## **The book I want is always checked out!**

Consider placing the book on hold. For \$0.25, you will be placed on the wait list for the item. When the item is available, we will transfer it to the pick-up location of your choice and notify you by e-mail, phone call or letter to let you know what we are holding the item just for you.

## **What do I do if my card is lost or stolen?**

Treat your library card as you would a credit card. You are responsible for all items charged on your card, whether or not you make the charges yourself. If your card is lost, stolen, or borrowed, you are responsible for any items charged to your card until you have notified the Library. Protect yourself and keep the Library informed. There is a \$1 charge for all replacement cards.

## **Whenever I want to go to the Central Library, the parking lot is full! What can I do?**

If you would like to call us before visiting, we are happy to alert you about the parking situation. We do not have our own dedicated parking lot at the Central Library, but our branches rarely have parking problems.

## **How do I find out what programs the Library is offering?**

Check our website at <http://www.wichita.lib.ks.us>, drop by your favorite branch for brochures, or look at the back page of *BookPage*.

## **Do you have meeting rooms available?**

The Wichita Public Library welcomes the use of its meeting room facilities for the civic, educational, and public information meetings of interest to the citizens of Wichita. Meeting rooms are available on the terms and within the fee schedule established by the Library Board of Directors. Fees currently range \$10 - \$25. Rooms are available at the Central Library, Alford, Evergreen, Linwood, Orchard, Maya Angelou, Rockwell, and Westlink branches. For more information, contact the desired location.

# Park and Recreation

---

## **Do you rent out your facilities for birthday parties, family reunions etc.?**

Yes we do. We have 10 Recreation Centers and 5 Enclosed Shelter Buildings that are available for these types of functions.

## **How much does it cost to rent these facilities?**

In regards to the recreation centers, most typically you will get the lounge and the kitchen, which accommodates about 75 people. The fee for this is \$70.00 for 4 hours plus a \$60.00 refundable damage deposit. The full payment has to be made at the time of rental in order to reserve the space. Each additional hour beyond the initial 4 is \$17.50. There are other rooms available at additional fees. The enclosed shelter buildings cost \$70.00 for 4 hours plus a \$60.00 refundable damage deposit. These buildings however are a little more private and accommodate more people. It takes about 4 to 6 weeks to get the deposit back.

## **How much notice do you need in order to reserve one of the facilities?**

Typically we need a full 7 days notice in order to make the reservation. This notice is needed in order to make sure that there is air conditioning or heat and that the facilities are cleaned.

## **What are the restrictions in renting these facilities?**

The 3 main restrictions are **no smoking, no alcohol** and **no candles**. The facilities close at 10:00 PM. A list of rules and regulations are given to you at the time you make the rental.

## **Are your athletic fields available for rent?**

Yes, we do rent our softball diamonds located throughout the city. On most of the smaller less maintained fields, the fee is \$8.50 for 2 hours. Payment has to be made in full at the time the rental is made order to reserve the fields.

## **Do you allow weddings in the park?**

Yes we do. There is however a special event application that must be obtained. This application can be picked up on the 11<sup>th</sup> floor of City Hall in the Parks and Recreation Department.

## **Do you have organized adult sports?**

Yes, we have adult slow pitch softball. We have spring, summer and fall leagues as well as several tournaments throughout the summer. The fees vary from season to season.

## **Do you have organized youth sports?**

Yes we have various youth sports activities at the recreation centers as well as the Extreme Fun Youth Baseball and Softball Leagues in the summer. The recreation center sports are listed in the seasonal brochures and run throughout the year. The Extreme Fun League begins registration in March and the games begin the first week after school gets out.

## **What is the phone number to Sedgwick County Park?**

943-0192



# **WATER AND SEWER**

---

## **How much are water connection fees for a new service?**

It is best to call 268-4365 or 268-4555 for the price at a specific location, e-mail information about your project to staff, or you can use the chart under Customer Service at [www.wichita.gov/CityOffices/WaterAndSewer](http://www.wichita.gov/CityOffices/WaterAndSewer) for general information. Also, please be aware, the deposits and new account service fee must be paid to establish the service.

## **Can I install my own water service line? Will the Water Department extend the water service line to my house?**

The Water Department will install a meter and extend a service line from the main to the meter. The property owner is responsible for extending the service line from the meter to the house. A plumber should be contacted for installation costs. You may install your own service line; however, it must meet all City specifications, and be of acceptable material and depth. You may contact the Water Department at 268-4555 or Central Inspection at 268-4461 for more information.

## **How much would it cost to connect our house to City water where there is already a service line and meter?**

If there is a meter, box call 265-1300 about connecting the service. You may be required to post a deposit and pay a new account fee.

## **How soon will I get water? We have the lines in already.**

If the water main has been cleared for consumption and your plumber or builder has called in a "release" the service should be installed within 2-3 weeks of the fees being paid. If the fees have been paid and it has been longer than 3 weeks please call 219-8913 or 268-4365 to find out more information about the delay.

## **I want to get my well water tested.**

Contact the Department of Environmental Health at 268-8440.

## **Our water is yellow, rusty, pink, blue, green, purple, smells bad, tastes funny - have you had any reports about the water being like this?**

Anytime there is a concern about the quality of the water being delivered into your home or business please call us. To report any problems, or complaints, please call 262-6000. One may also call our Water Lab at 269-4771.

## **My water meter is sunk way down in the ground and it is dangerous to people who walk through here. Or, there's water standing on top of my water meter.**

Call Water Distribution at 219-8921 about problems with the meter box or valve boxes near your home or business.

# **WATER AND SEWER**

---

**The Water Department repaired/installed lines a while back. They said they would come back and fix my lawn just like it was before. It's a mess - whom can I talk to?**

The Department usually waits a couple of weeks from the time a main is repaired to allow the dirt to settle before final yard restoration. Also, in the summer it may take a little longer due to the increased workload. If it seems it has been excessively long then call 219-8913 to make sure we get the work done as promptly as possible.

**I have water leaking in my yard, driveway, parking, etc. Where is this coming from? Can you come out and check it?**

For any type of possible water leak call 262-6000.

**Where can I take paint, oil, and hazardous stuff?**

The Household Hazardous Materials Collection site is now under the authority of Sedgwick County and is located at 801 Stillwell. For more information call the Department of Environmental Health at 660-7464.

**What are the hours of operation for the Household Hazardous Waste Facility?**

The hours of operation are: Tuesday & Thursday 9 a.m. to 7 pm.; Wednesday & Friday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; and Saturday 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**What is the address for the Household Hazardous Waste Facility?**

The facility is located at 801 Stillwell.

**What kinds of household hazardous wastes are accepted?**

Please contact the facility at 660-7464 to verify the items that are accepted, or check this line Household Hazardous Waste.

**We need to empty our RV camper potties. Where are the facilities for this?**

Sewage Treatment Plant #1, 3100 S. Grove has a dump location for bulk sewage. Call 303-8716 for more information. This site will be relocating to Sewage Treatment Plant #2, 2305 E. 57<sup>th</sup> St. S.

**Why does the Water Department want us to conserve water, but they don't fix leaks for weeks or months?**

During certain times of the year leaks occur at a faster rate than we can quickly repair. During these times, we prioritize the leaks and repair them as soon as possible. Also, the sources of small leaks are difficult to locate. To avoid large disruptive excavations, the Department may wait until the leak source can be better identified.

# WATER AND SEWER

---

**Why is a whole crew just standing around looking at a water leak that is tearing up my yard?**

This could be due to one or more of several factors: (1) the crew may be waiting for numerous underground pipes/cables to be located; (2) part of the crew may be on site and waiting for the rest of the crew to shut off the main, (3) the leak may require specialized equipment that is not immediately available.

**My toilet, basement drain, etc. is backing up - whom do I call to verify if it is my plumbing or the City's?**

Call the Water & Sewer 24-hour emergency number 262-6000. Sewer Maintenance personnel will be dispatched to the location. If a problem is found in the City's sewer, it will be corrected and you will be notified. You will also be notified if the City sewer does not have a problem.

**Is my basement sump pump installed correctly to prevent damage to my property and my neighbors' property?**

Call the Sewer Maintenance sump pump inspector at 268-4045 for proper installation guidelines and inspections.

**Why can't we wash paintbrushes, oil pans, etc. outside and discharge it to the storm sewer - it gets treated at the wastewater treatment plant doesn't it?**

NO!! The City operates and maintains two separate collection systems - sanitary sewer and storm drain. Any waste that goes down the storm drain does not get treated. With few exceptions, only storm and irrigation water is allowed to be discharged to the storm drain. Wastes, such as petroleum based oils and mercury, should not be disposed of either in the storm drain or sanitary sewer. Please collect these wastes and take them to the Household Hazardous Waste facility. For a list of wastes that are prohibited from being discharged into the sanitary sewer, please call 303-8703.

**A manhole suddenly appeared in my yard. How did it get there?**

The manhole was buried below ground. A maintenance crew raised it to the proper grade. Manholes need to be 5" above ground level to provide access for cleaning and maintenance and to prevent rainwater and other surface drainage from entering and overtaxing the sewer.

**Can you move the manhole out of my yard?**

Manhole locations are determined by the configuration of the sewers to which they are attached. Relocating a manhole requires changing the alignment, and possibly the grade of a sewer, which will impede flow. In almost every case, relocating a manhole is not practical.

**I was told the City has an easement in my yard. Explain what that means.**

An easement gives the City the right to construct and maintain public facilities in an area. Easements are obtained from property owners. Most easements in the City were granted by developers when they platted the land for development. Streets and utility lines are the most common facilities constructed in easements. The property owner must allow the owners of the facilities in the easement to have access. The property owner has responsibility for maintaining

# **WATER AND SEWER**

---

the land in the easement, but in most cases facility owners will restore any areas that are excavated or damaged during maintenance work.

## **How do you calculate the average winter consumption (AWC) that appears on my bill?**

The average winter consumption (AWC) is calculated as an average of the bills rendered in the months of December, January, February, and March.

## **Can I pay my bill online?**

Currently you cannot pay your bill online. We are investigating the possibilities of providing this service.

## **How does the water rate structure work?**

Your average winter consumption is designed to be the level of consumption for your account, which allows for domestic consumption (drinking, bathing, washing clothes, etc). Amounts used above this level contribute to peak service demand and are frequently seasonal uses such as irrigation. On any given bill, the amount used above 110% of AWC goes into a Block 2 charge. Amounts used above 310% of AWC go into a Block 3 charge.

## **What is the storm water charge that appears on my bill?**

This is a charge that has been enacted by the City Council to provide utility revenue for the construction and maintenance of storm drainage facilities within the City of Wichita. The charge is \$1.40 per equivalent residential unit (ERU). Commercial properties receive a charge that is based on the amount of impervious surface area, which generates runoff.

## **What is the Kansas Water Plan charge?**

This is a charge enacted by the Kansas Legislature to provide funds for various water related projects in the State. The charge is 3.2 cents per thousand gallons of consumption and is turned over to the state.

## **What is the fluoride level of the City's drinking water?**

The City's drinking water contains approximately 0.3mg/L (PPM) of naturally occurring fluoride.

## **What is the hardness of the City's drinking water?**

The average hardness of the City's drinking water is 6.3 grains per gallon (108 mg/L as Calcium Carbonate).

## **How much sodium is in the City's drinking water?**

The City's drinking water contains from 80-100 mg/L (PPM) of sodium. Any questions about the fluoride, hardness or sodium levels, please call or e-mail Terry Pajor (Lab & Operations Director) at 269-4766.